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INSIGHTS FROM EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS

Media Contact: Sheena Karami (405) 717-5966
sheena.karami@expresspros.com



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On Admin Professionals Day, a Look at a Rapidly Changing Profession

The Top 6 Skills of a Modern Administrative Professional

Technology Will Empower, Not Replace, Executive Assistants

“Outthinking Trouble”

OKLAHOMA CITY, April 24, 2019 – On Administrative Professionals Day 2019, Express Employment Professionals is releasing a closer look at the modern administrative professional.

With technology transforming the way America’s offices operate and the advent of smart phones, administrative professionals have felt some of the most disruptive changes of any profession. Basic needs like typing, organizing and scheduling are no longer enough to fill the job description of one position. The most menial tasks are automated as technology streamlines once time-consuming processes. The result: administrative professionals are being called to take on coordination of more complex tasks, changing the skill sets that employers seek.



According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), more than half a million Americans work in administrative professional jobs, with annual earnings averaging more than \$61,000. The greatest number work in colleges, universities and professional schools, while the financial services industry has the greatest concentration of professionals in executive support roles. Changes in this profession affect a significant portion of the workforce, meaning workers’ adaptability will affect the broader economy.

Based on industry research and insights from Express experts, the six top skills needed for the modern administrative professional include:

- Business acumen
- People management
- Problem solving

- Strategic thinking
- Project and event planning
- Technology proficiency

Administrative Professional as Problem Solver

Terri Greeno, an Express Employment Professionals franchise owner in Crystal Lake, Illinois, explains that new technology “will allow assistant and administrative roles to perform at a higher level and increase their value to the organization.” The modern administrative professional or executive assistant, she says, “watches the horizon for the executive while maintaining a well-ordered landscape.”

“Outthinking trouble,” Greeno said, is among the “keys to success. Skills are not only typing anymore.”

Shannon Wenninger, an Express franchise owner on the north side of Indianapolis, also sees administrative professionals increasingly handling complicated issues.

“A true executive assistant is a problem solver, a consultant to his or her boss, a strong writer, organizer and member of the team,” she said. “They make sure the executive is focused on those key activities for the success of the organization while handling the majority of the tasks that could take his or her boss off course from what they need to achieve.”

Technology as an Empowering Force

Mina Stallworth, administrative specialist in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, Express office says administrative professionals must stay ahead of the curve with technology.

“As executives are becoming more tech savvy themselves, it is now the support team’s responsibility not only to meet them at that level but essentially exceed their capabilities,” she said. “There is much more of a need, now more than ever, for executive assistants to be on a continuous path of development.”

But, she’s quick to note, that technology should be empowering.

“With technology simplifying many processes and creating efficiencies, it gives the administrative support the opportunity to be more efficient and resourceful,” she said. “They are finding new ways to do traditional tasks while not being tied down to a desk, which gives them the opportunity to be more involved in other areas of the business.”

Stallworth emphasizes that technology and the changing workplace are not a threat to administrative professionals, provided they adapt with the times.

“I don’t foresee these roles being eliminated but really evolving into an even stronger support role as they are becoming multifaceted,” she said. “Most leaders are now tasked to wear multiple hats, with expanded responsibilities of three to four people themselves; so a capable executive assistant will assist them not only in staying afloat but staying ahead by anticipating their needs, foreseeing problems and addressing them proactively.”

An executive assistant has a role as “a liaison between the executive team and the internal staff due to the executive assistant’s strong relationship building skills,” she emphasized. “Understanding personalities, timing, communication styles and approaches and having confidential knowledge and overall trust and reliability” cannot be replaced by technology.

Advice for Executives

Wenninger, meanwhile, has advice for businesses grappling with whether to hire administrative professionals.

“With the appropriate help, you can stay focused on building your business while your administrative professional can help you run the business you have already built,” he said.

“Today’s workplaces look vastly different from those 20 years ago, and the workplaces a decade or two from now will have changed dramatically, too,” said Bill Stoller, CEO of Express. “But there are skills that Alexa—or any ‘smart’ device will never replace and that will always be in demand, regardless of the changes we experience. Professionals who can foresee challenges and think critically are essential to businesses success, and as the administrative professional’s skillset evolves even more, he or she will be seen less as an ‘assistant’ and more as a partner.”

If you would like to arrange for an interview with Bill Stoller to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena Karami, Director of Corporate Communications and PR, at (405) 717-5966.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 800 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Since its inception, Express has put more than 6 million people to work worldwide.

About Express Employment Professionals

Express Employment Professionals puts people to work. It generated \$3.56 billion in sales and employed a record 566,000 people in 2018. Its long-term goal is to put a million people to work annually. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com.